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AUTHOR Boller, Jon D.
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ABSTRACT

Concurrent with the increasing interest in the training group (T-Group) as a source of growth and personal awareness for its participants, is a need to examine the effects of the T-group on certain personality types. This paper presents a rationale for examining the effects of the T-group on introverts and extroverts. Two T-group styles were examined, a sensory awareness group and a verbal cognitive group. Results indicate that the sensory awareness group is more profitable to both personality types, and that there is a direct relationship between personality type and profit in a T-group. While profit was less for the introvert, there was reason to believe that an extended group experience might have been more profitable. Profit was measured by quantifying emotional reactions to the on-going group process at timed sampling intervals via Homan's Social Exchange model. Poker chips were used as symbolic representations of positive and negative effect. (Author)

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SOME DIFFERENTIAL EFFECTS OF TWO TRAINING GROUP STYLES

Jon D. Boller

The purpose of this paper is to explain, briefly, the nature of the study undertaken, and some of the results of that study. In fact several exciting areas of investigation were implicit, and I feel that, in the final analysis many more questions were raised than were answered. These questions will be posed at the end of this paper, (deviating from standard procedure) as perhaps they are to be better considered at that point.

1. The study was intended to investigate differences in emotional reaction to two contrasting T-group styles, i.e., a sensory awareness style and a verbal-cognitive style. The sensory awareness group was patterned after both a combination of Esalen-oriented experiences and exercises borrowed from Gunther's Sensory Relaxation (1968). The focus of this particular style aimed at greater awareness of self via internal, or sensing reinforcers. A member of this group style summed it up later: "That really felt good all over." By contrast the verbal cognitive group was based more (though not exclusively) on here-and-now communication exercises and group interaction developed out of issues raised in the group. A member of this group later commented: "I think I really learned some things about myself and how I communicate with others."

2. So we have one group style in which people are discovering themselves through "bodily awareness", and another group wherein the focus is more toward verbal exchange and "cognitive awareness." The second ingredient added was a personality factor. All Ss were tested with the Maudsley Personality Inventory to determine degree of introversion or extroversion. As Eysenck has suggested, we found that a fairly random selection of students (N=40) ranged from high introversion to high extroversion with a quite normal distribution (Eysenck, 1957). Although Ss were not placed in groups by this criterion, even the distribution within each group (N=20) was fairly normal. Assuming that introverts are shy and rather

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quiet and withdrawn by nature, it was expected that they would encounter difficulty in both group styles, but particularly in the sensory awareness group. And it was expected that the extroverts would do quite well.

3. The final ingredient was the criterion measure, which was loosely defined was "profit." The notion for this criterion was borrowed from Homans (1961) who suggested that people appear to interact with one another so long as the exchange is mutually profitable, either at that time or at a future point in time. They give up so much in "risking" and this is called cost. They gain to some degree according to their needs at that moment, and this is called reward. If you subtract the losses from the gains (reward less cost) you arrive at a profit quotient. In the groups persons were emotionally risking in the various exercises and activities (cost) and they were receiving emotional rewards, either via personalized feedback or through internal sensory responses, depending upon their group style (reward). Subtracting cost from reward you would then have a measure of the emotional profit for that person in the group experience. A simple formula is: R - C = P.

4. How was emotional profit measured? Poker chips were used as symbols of risk and reward. Each group member was given a bag containing an equal number of red and white poker chips. He was also given a box into which he might put the chips. Instructions (in a capsule form) required that red chips be used as symbols of poor or negative feedback/feelings, and white chips represented good or positive feeling. Putting two chips of a color in the box suggested a strong positive or negative feeling, while one chip of either color suggested a milder evaluation of that feeling. No chips-no feelings (although this rarely occurred). To standardize sampling, the period during which the groups met was divided into 15 equal sampling units. At fifteen minute intervals a small, bell-like sound was emitted from the observation room, at which point (via instructions given in a pre-group training session) members would evaluate their present state of feeling. For the verbal-cognitive group this posed no problem, and for the sensory awareness group a brief interval was allowed after the signal so as not to disrupt an ongoing experience.

RESULTS

Profit was determined by collecting each S's container and subtracting the total of red chips from the total of white chips. The t ratio was computed between the mean profit score for members of the SA condition and the mean profit score for members of the VC condition. Ss with a large number of red chips, and whose profit score indicated a net loss, were reported as having a minus profit score. The computed t ratio was 1.98, with df=38. Using the .05 level of confidence, it was concluded that there was a significant difference between the mean profit score for members of the SA group and members of the VC group. These data are presented in Table 2.

For this analysis, the t ratio was computed for introverts' and extroverts' mean profit scores in both conditions, after dichotomizing Ss by MPI score (see Table 1). The mean profit score for introverts as a prescriptive grouping was 9.05, and for extroverts was 13.60, yielding a t ratio of 3.29. This t was found to be significant at the .05 level. Extroverts profited significantly more than introverts from the training group modality. These data are presented in Table 3.

To answer the question of within-groups differences, t ratios were computed between the mean profit scores for introverts and extroverts in each group. Comparing the mean profit scores for introverts in both group conditions, the computed t was 1.30, which does not exceed the required critical t ratio. Comparing mean profit scores for extroverts in both group conditions, the computed t was 3.01, which does exceed significance limits. These data are presented in Tables 4 and 5. Finally, a Pearson Product-Moment correlation coefficient was computed to examine the degree of relationship between MPI score and profit score for Ss in both group conditions. The resultant correlation was .74 between MPI score and profit score for all Ss in both groups. The squared r=.55.

DISCUSSION

A review of the results suggests the following:

1. Extroverts appeared to profit more (in terms of emotional experience) from the training group as a whole than did introverts.

2. Profit for all Ss was measurably higher in the SA group condition than in the VC group condition;

3. There was little difference in profit for introverts in either group style, but a highly significant difference was found in the profit scores for extroverts in both groups, the SA condition eliciting greater profit;

4. There appears to be a significantly positive relationship between personality prescription and profit in the T-group, i.e., a little more than one-half of the variance in profit score might be attributed to personality type, as measured by the MPI.

Considering the above, there appears to be evidence that introverts do, in fact, experience less profit from the training group than do extroverts. Considering the popular stereotype of the introvert as shy, inhibited, and somewhat withdrawn, this statement might seem obvious. It should be noted, however, that the mean profit score for introverts in the SA condition (11.00) approached the mean profit score for all Ss (12.80) in the SA condition. Stated another way, introverts realized much higher profit in the group least like normal, social groups, of which the VC group style would be more representative.

That the introvert would be less inhibited, or would condition more readily to certain previously unlearned types of behavior in a novel situation, is in keeping with Berlyne's (1968) comments. The SA group style is a novel situation for the inexperienced participant. It encourages behavior that is considerably different from most social norms, i.e., holding hands with a stranger, feeling a stranger's face while blindfolded, etc. While learned inhibitions prevent the introvert from participating fully in this behavior, the newness of the situation allows some new conditioning to occur. It might be expected that profit for the introvert would increase proportionately to the time engaged in this new behavior. Further, it might be hypothesized that learning would occur with increasing rapidity as the introvert increased his repertoire of behaviors in the SA condition. E observed this phenomenon.

Initially tense and withdrawn, the introvert in the SA condition appeared more comfortable and enthusiastic as the group progressed, whereas the extrovert remained more or less watchful and vigilant throughout the group experience. This latter point suggests additional research, wherein introverts and extroverts are observed over an extended period of time in an SA-styled group for changes in behavior. Further follow-up research is also indicated to ascertain which personality type, introvert or extrovert, retains behaviors learned in the group.

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF MPI SCORES FOR TOTAL GROUP, SA GROUP AND VC GROUP.

Total Group MPI Scores	SA Group	VC Group
7		
8		
10		
10		
10		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19	7	8
20	10	10
21	10	16
22	15	17
23	19	18
26	20	21
27	23	22
27	26	22
28	27	27
28	28	28
Median		
28	30	28
29	31	29
29	31	29
29	32	29
30	34	32
31	35	32
31	35	32
32	40	32
32	40	39
32	42	39
32		
32 N=40	N=20	N=20
34 $\bar{X}$=26.13	$\bar{X}$=26.75	$\bar{X}$=25.50
35 SD= 9.34	SD=10.14	SD= 8.35
39		
39		
40		
40		
42		

TABLE 2

A COMPARISON OF THE MEAN PROFIT SCORE

FOR SA AND VC GROUP MEMBERS

Training Group Style	$\bar{X}$	SD	t-ratio	Critical t-ratio
Sensory Awareness N=20	12.80	5.55	1.98*	1.69
Verbal Cognitive N=20	9.85	3.39	df=38	

*$t > 1.69$ significant at .05 level

TABLE 3

A COMPARISON OF THE MEAN PROFIT SCORE

OF INTROVERTS AND EXTROVERTS

Personality Type	$\bar{X}$	SD	t-ratio	Critical t-ratio
Introvert N=20	9.05	5.01	3.29*	1.69
Extrovert N=20	13.60	3.34	df=38	

*$t >$ 1.69 significant at .05 level

TABLE 4

COMPARISON OF THE MEAN PROFIT SCORE FOR INTROVERTS IN THE SA GROUP STYLE AND INTROVERTS IN THE VC GROUP STYLE

Group Style	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\underline{t}$-ratio	Critical $\underline{t}$-ratio
Sensory Awareness N=10	11.00	6.88	1.30*	1.73
Verbal Cognitive N=10	7.80	2.67	df=18	

*$\underline{t} > 1.73$ significant at .05 level

TABLE 5

COMPARISON OF THE MEAN PROFIT SCORE FOR EXTROVERTS IN THE SA GROUP STYLE AND EXTROVERTS IN THE VC GROUP STYLE

Group Style	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\underline{t}$-ratio	Critical $\underline{t}$-ratio
Sensory Awareness N=10	15.90	2.91	3.01*	1.73
Verbal Cognitive N=10	11.80	2.85	df=18	

*t > 1.73 significant at .05 level

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